

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday. April 17. 1707.

I Prepar'd the Reader for something a little peculiar in this Paper, by telling him, the general Observation, I should make on the Substance of the two last Papers, should be the Work of this.

And my Observation is, that from the Proceedings of King Henry VIII. in pulling down the Pope's Supremacy, demolishing and suppressing the *Monastical Idolatry*, is to be deduced; the *Reason why*, and *Manner how* the Church of England, now established, came to be reform'd into an Episcopal Church; the Church of Scotland into a Presbyterian, and by what Steps, and on what Occasions, the Dissenters in either Kingdom come to dissent from them.

As this will bring us to the true present State of *All Britain*, as to the Case of *Religion*, which is the Head I am upon; so I hope, the Connection of the Story will be

preserv'd to the Satisfaction of the Reader, and my looking so far back be found not unprofitable, since nothing can contribute so much to giving us a clear Light in things, as to go back to their Causes and Originals, and from thence observe both the Reasons and the Degrees, why and by which they come to their present Condition.

When King Henry VIII. pull'd down the Pope's Supremacy, his Ambition getting the Predominacy of his Devotion, guided him to make himself the Usurper, in the room of that Usurper he had dethron'd; he forgot the true Gospel Supremacy of Christ Jesus, which if it had been Ecclesiastically establish'd, had prevented great Part of the Blood and Confusion which happen'd afterward, and the Royalty of the Crown had receiv'd no Diminution of just Authority, only a due Restraint from those Excursions, which it

has

has made upon Scriptural Authority, since, and the Disputes against which has brought most of the Divisions, which have rent this Church and Kingdom ever since.

When the King, I say, pull'd down the Supremacy of the Pope, he immediately erected that of his own, and that in a most tyrannical and extravagant Manner; this, as I have noted in another place, was but de-throning one Devil, to set up another, pulling down the Exorbitance of a forreign, to exalt the Power of a domestick Tyrant, and indeed he exercis'd his new Supremacy with all the most insufferable Insolencies, that his unbounded Lusts could dictate, and put to Death every body that did but refuse to own it.

On this new erected Monster of Royal Supremacy, which modern Authors call the *Regale*, has been built most of the unhappy Disputes between the *Dissenters* and the Church of England, and especially that about the Government of the Church, under the Tyranny of Diocesan, Episcopacy; nay, I may say, that here began the immediate Differences, which shew'd themselves even in the Infancy of the Reformation.

However, I would have this noted also, that this is not altogether to be laid to the Charge of the first Reformers, no nor of the great Instruments in this King's Time, of opening the first Light to the Protestant Church; for the Reformation was very young, and under great Discouragements, and the furious Temper of this King was such, that if they went never so little faster, than his Caprice and Humour could bear, it was their immediate Destruction; if he brought on the Reformation with one Hand, he put it back with another; if he executed a Papist for denying his tyrannical Supremacy to day, he burnt a faithful Martyr for denying Popish Idolatry to morrow; to day he pulls down Romish Tyranny, to morrow erects his six bloody Articles, and Blood was the Price of resisting any thing he pleas'd to espouse; the Heads and Encouragers of the Reformation therefore were glad to lay hold on any Handle, that presented it, self to pull down that Insolence of Rome, which they struggled with; and in Hopes to pull down her whole Power, they scrupled not exal-

ing the *Regale*, not perhaps foreseeing, that tho' they pull'd down one Tyranny, they exalted another; that the Mischief remained, tho' the Masters were chang'd, or that this Monster was big with future Mischiefs, which generating from one another, would still bring the Church under, and keep her in perpetual and unscriptural Bondage.

In the Simplicity of their Souls, I say, they did this; and whatever follow'd; they were so far in the right, since by it they effectually laid the Axe to the Root of Religious Subjection, and the impious Usurpation of the Church of Rome.

This fixing the Supremacy on the King, however, was the Foundation of two things, which are now the Subject of so much Strife in this Island, and which have not protracted only, but rendred abortive all the Hopes of a general Uniformity, and till now obstructed the common Unions of Charity and good Neighbourhood among us—
These are,

1. The Right of the civil Magistrate to appoint Ceremonies, and give the Sanction of necessity to things in the Worship of GOD in themselves indifferent.
2. The Government of the Church by Diocesan Bishops.

The Supremacy in Matters Ecclesiastical being lodg'd in the King, the Church was entirely thrown into his Arms; he was not only its civil Protector, as we all allow in the Article to that purpose now, but he was the general Director, and prescrib'd what Injunctions he thought; nay, to such a Height did that King carry his Prerogative over GOD's Church, that he exercis'd meer abstracted Popery, even in the very Act of suppressing Popery, and without pretending to the Infallibility, yet assum'd the Ecclesiastical Legislature in all its Points, as effectually as the Pope himself.

While the Church became thus subjected to the arbitrary Will of Kingly Power, 'tis no wonder, that her Reformation, which follow'd immediately on the Death of this King, bore some Analogy to the Schemes laid in his Time, preserv'd the *Regale*, and all the usurp'd Authority which was so lately instrumental in the Work of Reformation, and

and no wonder if the Reformation from hence became too partial and imperfect.

'Tis true, that Queen *Mary* renouncing again the Supremacy, and restoring the Church of *Rome*, and the Authority, Queen *Elizabeth* was not very forward in reassuming it, nor ever did pretend to it in the full Manner and absolute Degree, that King *Henry* had exercis'd it; yet this it left behind it, that the Church was subjected to

the civil Magistrate, and the Power of carrying on a further Reformation was as it were given up to the Crown.

And here began Dissenting from the Church, and this is the End and true Reason of my looking back upon these things, which I hope, the Readers of this Paper will think is neither unpleasant or unprofitable; I shall pursue it farther in my next.

MISCELLANEA.

THE Matter of Bankrupts, I brought last Paper to the Bill for two Thirds in Number and Value; I have acknowledg'd as much as any Body can desire of me, as to the Abuses committed in the Case of that Law, by a Knot of subtil, designing, case-hardned Wretches, whose Consciences scrupling no Oaths, led them to all the Latitudes, the Letter of the Law too unwarily laid open before them.

But as this is no way a Charge upon an innocent and well-meaning Man, so I say, it was no way a Reason, why that Law, which was certainly the best Provision that ever was made in this Matter, should have been abolish'd; it was indeed a good Reason why it should have been amended, and why necessary Clauses might have been added to make it effectual on one hand, and secure it from Frauds on the other; but to repeal the whole Law was a meer Plot of those, that were more afraid of the Effect of its honest Meaning, than injur'd by the ill Use made of it.

To illustrate this, I cannot but leave an Instance on Record, of which I was an Eye-Witness, and the Persons are not so far off, but they may yet be pointed out, nor so ill known, but they may be mark'd, nor I so afraid of them, but I may still name them, if it appear needful.

A poor unfortunate Citizen, who had fail'd for a very considerable Sum several Years before, and had been persecuted to the last Degree, even to Want of all Manner of Comfort, almost grown old in Misery,

and out of Hope of Redress, apply'd himself by Vertue of this Law to a Judge, one of the Barons of the Exchequer, to be reliev'd: If I remember, his List of Debts amounted to about 17000*l*. and the Number of Creditors to about 140 or thereabouts; of these, the poor Man had not only procur'd 13000*l*. in Value, but all in Number, 3 or 4 excepted, to sign or acquiesce in a Writing of Composition, the Composition was really for nothing at all down; for every Body saw the poor Man had nothing, or but very little to submit on, but the Conditions were no Part of the Act, the poor Debtor was to give his Bond to pay a small Composition at a certain Term of Years, and it was very plain, the Design of his Creditors was to have him deliver'd, and be set free, for as to Payment they expected nothing.

It would have mov'd a Turk to hear this Person tell his Story to the Judge, and I could observe Tears fall from the Eyes of some of his Creditors themselves that stood by, as well as from others that were not concern'd in it.

He told the Way how he came to fail, he told the flourishing Circumstances he was in before, he told the Judge, that when he first miscarry'd, he call'd his Creditors together, and offer'd them all he had, and made it appear to them, that if no Losses had fall the Estate, it would be sufficient to pay them all; but if they would give him Time to get it in, he offer'd 15*l*. per Pound, out of it, and he produc'd an Instrument sign'd a great many Years before, in which almost

all his Creditors had accepted that Offer, but 4 Men for about 2000*l.* Debt of the Money, refus'd to hearken to any Composition, and drove him to Prison, from thence to the *Mint*, that then a Commission of Bankrupt following, and which had been on Foot about 14 or 15 Years, the Estate was so torn to peices, and he so harass'd from one Extremity to another, that the whole Estate was spent, sunk or lost, the Commission had never been able to make a Dividend, nor he to subsist himself or Family, nor to undertake any Business, either at his Trade or otherwise; that he had several Times gotten into publick Business, but as soon as ever it was known, was so constantly pursued with Arrests, Escapes, Judgments, &c. that he was forced from them, and as if they had pursu'd him not for their Debts, but for his own Destruction; he could never be permitted so much as to work for them, because they would not agree who should be paid first.

He prov'd to them, that having had a Place of 200*l.* per Annum. in the Government, he had offer'd all the Salary to be paid among them, if they would but let him enjoy the Hopes of going on, and once being free, and would live upon what Perquisites he could make besides, but could not bring it to be accepted.

A Crowd of the Creditors of this Man appear'd with him, and declaring they were sensible of the Truth of it that they had lost their whole Debts by the Obstinacy of 4 Men, that they knew the Man had nothing, and were willing he should be discharged.

On the other hand, Three of the Four cruel Creditors appear'd by Lawyers, and the Fourth had the Confidence to come himself, between whom and the Judge happen'd a very pleasant Dialogue, which I shall divert you with in my next.

ADVERTISEMENT S.

These are to give Notice.

THAT *MARY KIRLEUS*, the Widow of *JOHN KIRLEUS*, Son of Dr. *T. H. KIRLEUS*, a Sword-Physician, in ordinary to King Charles II. Sells (rightly prepar'd) his Famous Drink and Pills; experienc'd above 50 Years to

cure all Ulcers, Sores, Scabs, Itch, Scurf, Scurvies, Leprosies, Running of the Reins, and the most inveterate VENEREAL Disease, with all its attending Symptoms, without Fluxing, Confinement, or destructive Mercurial Preparations: These incomparable Medicines need no Words to express their Virtues; the many miserable Ones that have been happily cured, after given over by others, sufficiently recommend them as the most Sovereign Remedy in the World against all such Malignities: She cures many after Fluxing, and in Compassion to the distressed, will deal according to the Patient's Ability. The Drink is 3*s.* the Quart, the Pill 1*s.* the Box with Directions, and Advice Grains.

††† She lives as the Golden-Ball in Hand-Court, over against great Turnstile in Holborn.

THE Royal Chymical Cosmesick, experienced for 7 Years past, by above a 1000 several Persons, effectually to cure the most inveterate Scabs, Itch, Testers, Ring worms, white scaly Breakings out, often taken for the Leprosy, Salt-Humours, &c. In any Part of the Body, and that in a few days, when the Deformity has been some Years. It infallibly frees the Face, &c. of Worms in the Skin, Pimples, Pustules, Heat, Redness, Yellowness, Sunburnings, and such like Defilements, rendering the Skin white, smooth and soft: Being the most certain and safe Restorer, Preserver and Improver of a good Complexion, or natural Beauty, yet known. 'Tis a neat clean Medicine, and of a grateful Scent, fit to be used by the most delicate of the Fair Sex, or to young Children. Price 5*s.* or 2*s.* and 6*d.* the Bottle with Directions. To be had at Mr. Roper's, Bookseller in Fleetstreet, and at the Golden Ball in Half Moon Court, on Ludgate-Hill.

THE Planet Mercury, being to pass under the Sun, on Thursday the 24th of this Month, which will be an appearance of great consequence in Astronomy; all Persons that are provided with Skill and Instruments to observe it, are desir'd to attend, to see him enter on the Sun a little before Sun set, or if he be not then visible, to expect his going off from the Sun's disk at his rising next Morning. J. Matthews, in Little-Britain, will receive all Letters without Charge to you.